



## Developing and validating a parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers with hearing impaired children

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Email: donyavi@iauneka.ac.ir Received: 09.02.2023 Acceptance: 04.11.2023

Journal of  
Applied Family Therapy

eISSN: 2717-2430  
http://Aftj.ir

Vol. 4, No. 4, Pp: 456-488  
Fall 2023

Original research article

### How to Cite This Article:

Mortazavi Kiasari, F., Donyavi, R., & Esmaili Shad, B. (2023). Developing and validating a parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers with hearing impaired children. *aftj*, 4(4): 456-488.



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### Abstract

**Aim:** The purpose of the research was to develop and validate a parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers with hearing impaired children. **Method:** The research was conducted in a qualitative-quantitative way. The research community consisted of mothers with hearing impaired children in Sari and Miandorud cities. In the qualitative part, the purposeful sampling method was used until saturation. Sampling method was available in quantitative section and 16 mothers were selected. The interview tool was unstructured. In order to ensure validity and reliability, the recorded interviews along with the content obtained from them were provided to the interviewees and the method of reliability of extracted data according to the conducted interviews was used. Transferability method was used to provide validity. The total efficiency of two encoders is equal to 0.90. SPSS 26 and Amos software were used to determine the validity and suitability of program components. **Results:** Based on the interviews and the background of the research, the mentioned parenting program was compiled in 10 sessions, which consists of: accepting the child's deaf problem, using the experiences of mothers with deaf children, familiarizing mothers with how to care for a deaf child, Acquaintance with methods of emotion control, familiarization with ways to relieve the feeling of helplessness, familiarization with ways to communicate with a deaf child, interaction with the child, familiarization with ways to relieve the feeling of fatigue, relief from the feeling of hopelessness, relief from the child's feeling of loneliness. **Conclusion:** The research results showed the validity and appropriateness of the compiled components of the parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers. **Keywords:** lived experiences, mothers, children, hearing damage.

## Introduction

Hearing loss is defined as a degree of hearing impairment that makes it difficult for a child to process language information through listening, with or without amplification, and adversely affects the child's educational performance (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004; as cited in Smith et al., 2012). More than 90% of all children with hearing loss are born into families with hearing parents (Wright et al., 2021). For most of these families, their child with hearing loss is the first person they have ever encountered with this condition (Mainzent al., 2008). Research findings suggest that physical and psychological abnormalities in children can manipulate parental relationships and affect family functioning (Khodaparast-Kazeroni, 2016). Typically, after a child with hearing loss is identified, parents enter a phase of grieving and mourning, considering their child's hearing loss as the loss of a normal life for the child and the entire family, and they may become angry, sad, guilty, and hopeless (Van Eldik et al., 2004; Howe, 2006). The birth and presence of a child with hearing impairment provide unique and different challenges for the family that may lead to feelings of despair, sadness, depression, disbelief, as well as anger, frustration, shame, and humiliation, and individuals in such families may exhibit different behaviors, such as aggression, withdrawal, rejection, and avoidance (Gilliver et al., 2013; Murphy, 2007; Van Eldik et al., 2004); their dreams about the child's future collapse, and they become depressed. They may experience a series of emotional reactions similar to those seen in bereavement, and their social and marital life may be affected, leading to feelings of isolation, loneliness, confusion, and joylessness (Mollasadeghi and Jahedi Fard, 2020). People's reactions to a child with hearing loss in public gatherings and their lack of understanding and acceptance further exacerbate parents' distress and drive them to isolation and withdrawing from communication (Steinberg et al., 1997).

The purpose of the research was to develop and validate a parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers with hearing impaired children.

## Method

The research was conducted in a qualitative-quantitative way. The research community consisted of mothers with hearing impaired children in Sari and Miandorud cities. In the qualitative part, the purposeful sampling method was used until saturation. Sampling method was available in quantitative section and 16 mothers were selected. The interview tool was unstructured. In order to ensure validity and reliability, the recorded interviews along with the content obtained from them were provided to the interviewees and the method of reliability of extracted data according to the conducted interviews was used. Transferability method was used to provide validity. The total efficiency of two encoders is equal to 0.90. SPSS 26 and Amos software were used to determine the validity and suitability of program components.

## Results

Based on the interviews and the background of the research, the mentioned parenting program was compiled in 10 sessions, which consists of: accepting the child's deaf problem, using the experiences of mothers with deaf children, familiarizing mothers with how to care for a deaf child, Acquaintance with methods of emotion control, familiarization with ways to relieve the feeling of helplessness, familiarization with ways to communicate with a deaf child,

interaction with the child, familiarization with ways to relieve the feeling of fatigue, relief from the feeling of hopelessness, relief from the child's feeling of loneliness.

### **Conclusion**

The research results showed the validity and appropriateness of the compiled components of the parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers.

Based on the findings of the present study, which are based on the objective experiences of mothers with hearing-impaired children, it is recommended that:

- As long as mothers of hearing-impaired children feel a lack of necessary skills for parenting, free educational workshops should be identified for this group of mothers and provided with appropriate training to reduce their sense of helplessness.

- Since many mothers of hearing-impaired children do not have the opportunity to participate in face-to-face educational workshops, it is recommended that virtual parenting workshops be held for them.

- To reduce the despair of mothers with hearing-impaired children, it is recommended to use a counseling system that accompanies mothers with hearing-impaired children, so that this group of mothers can always solve and resolve their problems through telephone counseling.

- In order to share the experiences of mothers with hearing-impaired children with each other, it is proposed that virtual networking groups be launched by relevant centers, and under the guidance of experts and counselors, mothers as group members can exchange experiences with each other.

Limitations of the present study were: the inability to generalize the results of the study to other societies due to the geographical limitations of the statistical population and the lack of universality of the model obtained due to limited data collection.

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